

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A system for wagering comprising:

a vending device that accepts a sales price from a current user and assigns a multi-level wagering account having a play value to the current user;

one or more gaming machines wherein at least a portion of the play value from the multi-level wagering account may be used to purchase a play;

a processor communicably coupled to the vending device and the one or more gaming machines that distributes the sales price accepted from the current user to a specified number of previous users and an operator of the system in accordance with a payout formula by increasing ~~increases~~ the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts of the specified previous users ~~based on the sales price accepted from the current user,~~ increases the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user based on the sales price accepted from ~~one or more~~ a specified number of subsequent users in accordance with the payout formula and decreases the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user based on the plays purchased by the current user at the one or more gaming machines; and

a data storage device communicably coupled to the processor that stores the play value of each multi-level wagering account.

Claim 2 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the vending device and the gaming machine are integrated into a single device.

Claim 3 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the processor and the data storage device are integrated into a computer.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The system of claim 1, wherein the processor further distributes a portion of the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user in accordance with the payout formula ~~each sales price accepted to [[an]] the operator of the system when the specified number of subsequent users has been reached.~~

Claim 5 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein each multi-level wagering account expires after a given time period and any unused play value for an expired multi-level wagering account is distributed to an operator of the system.

Claim 6 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the vending device provides the current user with information about the multi-level wagering account that allows the current user to purchase the play on the one or more gaming machines.

Claim 7 (original): The system of claim 6, wherein the information is stored in an electronic account, or electronically or magnetically a card, a smart card, a chip, a RFID device, a token, a personal data assistant, a communications device or other personal item.

Claim 8 (original): The system of claim 6, wherein the information comprises an account number and a password or biometric data.

Claim 9 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the one or more gaming machines are one or more video slot machine, video poker or blackjack machine, one or more computer games or a network-based gaming system accessible by one or more computers or communication devices.

Claim 10 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the vending device is a network-based electronic accounting system associated with a network-based gaming system.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The system of claim 1, wherein ~~processor increases the play value of the multi-level wagering accounts using a predetermined~~ the payout formula, the specified number of previous users and the specified number of subsequent users are predetermined, or a randomized payout formula or a combination thereof.

Claim 12 (original): The system of claim 11, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a one-level matrix.

Claim 13 (original): The system of claim 11, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a four-level matrix.

Claim 14 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the processor records the quantity of play accumulated for each multi-level wagering account in the data storage device.

Claim 15 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the processor records one or more winnings resulting from using the multi-level wagering account in the one or more gaming machines in the data storage device.

Claim 16 (original): The system of claim 15, wherein the winnings are associated with the multi-level wagering account, displayed at a remote location, transferred to a multi-level wagering account, used to place one or more wagers or exchanged for cash.

Claim 17 (original): The system of claim 1, wherein the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts is accessed from a remote location.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A method for wagering comprising the steps of:

receiving a sales price from a current user;

assigning a multi-level wagering account having a play value to the current user wherein a portion of the play value may be used to purchase a play on one or more gaming machines;

distributing the sales price received from the current user to a specified number of previous users and an operator of the system in accordance with a payout formula by increasing the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts of the specified
~~previous users based on the sales price received from the current user;~~

increasing the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user based on the sales price accepted from ~~one or more~~ a specified number of subsequent users in accordance with the payout formula; and

decreasing the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user based on the plays purchased by the current user at the one or more gaming machines.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of distributing a portion of the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user in accordance with the payout formula ~~each sales price accepted to [[an]] the operator of the system when the specified number of subsequent users has been reached.~~

Claim 20 (original): The method of claim 18, wherein each multi-level wagering account expires after a given time period and any unused play value for an expired multi-level wagering account is distributed to an operator of the system.

Claim 21 (original): The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of providing the current user with information about the multi-level wagering account that allows the current user to purchase the play on the one or more gaming machines.

Claim 22 (original): The method of claim 21, wherein the information is stored in an electronic account, or electronically or magnetically a card, a smart card, a chip, a RFID

device, a token, a personal data assistant, a communications device or other personal item.

Claim 23 (original): The method of claim 21, wherein the information comprises an account number and a password or biometric data.

Claim 24 (original): The method of claim 18, wherein the one or more gaming machines are one or more video slot machine, video poker or blackjack machine, one or more computer games or a network-based gaming system accessible by one or more computers or communication devices.

Claim 25 (currently amended): The method of claim 18, wherein the ~~play value of the multi-level wagering accounts is increased using a predetermined~~ payout formula, the specified number of previous users and the specified number of subsequent users are predetermined, or a randomized payout formula or a combination thereof.

Claim 26 (original): The method of claim 25, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a one-level matrix.

Claim 27 (original): The method of claim 25, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a four-level matrix.

Claim 28 (original): The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of recording the quantity of play accumulated for each multi-level wagering account.

Claim 29 (original): The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of recording one or more winnings resulting from using the multi-level wagering account in the one or more gaming machines.

Claim 30 (original): The method of claim 29, wherein the winnings are associated with the multi-level wagering account, displayed at a remote location, transferred to a multi-level wagering account, used to place one or more wagers or exchanged for cash.

Claim 31 (original): The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of accessing the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts from a remote location.

Claim 32 (currently amended): A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium comprising:

- a code segment for receiving a sales price from a current user;

- a code segment for assigning a multi-level wagering account having a play value to the current user wherein a portion of the play value may be used to purchase a play on one or more gaming machines;

- a code segment for distributing the sales priced received from the current user to a specified number of previous users and an operator of the system in accordance with a payout formula by increasing the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts of the specified previous users ~~based on the sale price received from the current user;~~

- a code segment for increasing the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user based on the sales price accepted from ~~one or more~~ a specified number of subsequent users in accordance with the payout formula; and

- a code segment for decreasing the play value of the multi-level wagering account of the current user based on the plays purchased by the current user at the one or more gaming machines.

Claim 33 (withdrawn): A system for wagering comprising:

- one or more multi-level wagering accounts;

a processor communicably coupled to the one or more gaming machines that distributes play value in the one or more multi-level wagering accounts from a portion of the sales price of other multi-level wagering accounts; and

one or more gaming machines wherein at least a portion of the play value from the one or more multi-level wagering accounts may be used to purchase a play.

Claim 34 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the one or more gaming machines one or more gaming machines are one or more video slot machine, video poker or blackjack machine, one or more computer games or a network-based gaming system accessible by one or more computers or communication devices.

Claim 35 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the play value is distributed using a computer.

Claim 36 (withdrawn): The system of claim 34, wherein the one or more computer games are connected to a computer.

Claim 37 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the one or more multi-level wagering accounts are distributed by a vending machine connected to a computer.

Claim 38 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the play value accumulated in the multi-level wagering account is determined by a predetermined payout formula based on subsequent multi-level wagering account sales.

Claim 39 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a one-level matrix.

Claim 40 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a four-level matrix.

Claim 41 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the computer records the quantity of play accumulated in one or more multi-level wagering accounts.

Claim 42 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the computer records one or more winnings resulting from using the multi-level wagering account in the one or more multi-level gaming machines.

Claim 43 (withdrawn): The system of claim 42, wherein the winnings are associated with the multi-level wagering account, displayed at a remote location, transferred to a multi-level wagering account, used to place one or more wagers or exchanged for cash.

Claim 44 (withdrawn): The system of claim 33, wherein the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts is accessed from a remote location.

Claim 45 (currently amended): A method of multi-level wagering comprising the steps of:

accumulating play value in a current multi-level wagering account from a portion of the sales price of a specified number of multi-level wagering accounts purchased subsequent to the current multi-level wagering account in accordance with a payout formula; and

using the accumulated play value in a gaming machine.

Claim 46 (canceled)

Claim 47 (original): The method of claim 45, wherein the step of purchasing at least one multi-level wagering account is by purchasing from a video slot machine or a vending machine.

Claim 48 (original): The method of claim 46, wherein the video slot machine or vending machine is computerized.

Claim 49 (currently amended): The method of claim 45, wherein the ~~play value accumulated in the multi-level wagering account is determined by a predetermined payout formula based on subsequent multi-level wagering account sales and the specified number of subsequent multi-level wagering accounts are predetermined, randomized or a combination thereof.~~

Claim 50 (original): The method of claim 49, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a one-level matrix.

Claim 51 (original): The method of claim 49, wherein the predetermined payout formula is at least a one-level matrix.

Claim 52 (original): The method of claim 45 wherein a computer records the quantity of play accumulated in one or more multi-level wagering accounts.

Claim 53 (original): The method of claim 45, wherein a computer records winnings resulting from using the multi-level wagering account in a gaming machine.

Claim 54 (original): The method of claim 53, wherein the winnings are associated with the multi-level wagering account, displayed at a remote location, transferred to a multi-level wagering account, used to place one or more wagers or exchanged for cash.

Claim 55 (original): The method of claim 54, further comprising the step of transferring the winnings associated with the multi-level wagering account to another multi-level wagering account.

Claim 56 (original): The method of claim 54, further comprising the step of using the winnings associated with the multi-level wagering account to place one or more wagers.

Claim 57 (original): The method of claim 54, further comprising the step of exchanging the winnings associated with the multi-level wagering account for cash.

Claim 58 (original): The method of claim 45, further comprising the step of accessing the play value of one or more multi-level wagering accounts from a remote location.

Claim 59 (withdrawn): A system for multi-level wagering comprising:

- one or more multi-level wagering accounts;

- a processor communicably coupled to the one or more gaming machines that distributes play value in the multi-level wagering accounts from a portion of the sales price of the subsequent purchase of multi-level wagering accounts until a predetermined play value is achieved; and

- one or more gaming machines operated by the play value from the one or more multi-level wagering accounts.

Claim 60 (withdrawn): A method of multi-level wagering comprising the steps of:

- purchasing at least one multi-level wagering account;

- accumulating play value in the multi-level wagering account until a predetermined play value is achieved; and

- using the play value accumulated in the multi-level wagering account to purchase a play.

Claim 61 (withdrawn): A system for multi-level wagering comprising:

- one or more multi-level wagering cards;

a processor that distributes play value in the multi-level wagering cards from a portion of the sales price of other multi-level wagering cards until a predetermined play value is achieved; and

one or more gaming machines capable of being operated by play value from the one or more multi-level wagering cards.

Claim 62 (withdrawn): A method of multi-level wagering comprising the steps of:

purchasing at least one multi-level wagering account;
accumulating play value in the multi-level wagering account; and
using the multi-level wagering account's accumulated play value to purchase a play.

Claim 63 (withdrawn): A system for multi-level wagering comprising:

one or more multi-level wagering cards;
a means for distributing play value in the multi-level wagering cards from a portion of the sales price of other multi-level wagering cards until a predetermined play value is achieved; and
one or more gaming machines capable of being operated by play value from the one or more multi-level wagering cards.